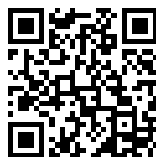

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1609

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PURGATORY

AND

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD:

A

LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

GRIMSHAW-STREET AND LUNE-STREET CHAPELS,

Preston,

MARCH 22D AND 29TH, 1821.

BY THOMAS RAFFLES, LL.D.

Liverpool:

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PREFACE.

I HAVE been compelled to the publication of this Lecture by the appearance of a pamphlet, at Preston, purporting to be an abridgment of it. If that document had been any thing like a faithful representation of what I delivered from the pulpit, I should have been contented, and rather thankful to the unknown individual for the service he would thus have rendered me. Nor, I believe, would the course of Lectures, with which the present is connected, have been delivered at all, if the exertions of the Popish Clergy in that town had not rendered such a measure, on the part of the Protestants, absolutely necessary. For myself, I can truly say, that I exceedingly dislike religious controversy; and it must be obvious to every one, that I can have no personal allusions in any part of the ensuing Lecture. What I have said respects the *system*, or rather, that portion of it, which, without any choice of

my own, was allotted to me for discussion. For many individuals of the Romish communion, as well clergy as laity, with whose characters I have been made acquainted, I cannot but entertain the highest regard; but their exemplary conduct in society is no argument whatever in favour of the antisciptural tenets of the Romish Church, but must only excite the deeper regret, that persons of so much moral excellence should be under the influence of sentiments so palpably erroneous and pernicious.

The Lecture was delivered a second time, on the 29th March, at the request of the multitudes who could not obtain admission to the Chapel on the 22d.

Liverpool, May 7th, 1821.



LECTURE, &c.

REV. XXI. 27.

AND THERE SHALL IN NO WISE ENTER INTO IT ANY
THING THAT DEFILETH.

—AND the question is, since all men are alike impure by nature, being *conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity*,* how they are to be purified and made fit for heaven. We say, and think that Scripture warrants the assertion, that men are to be purified by the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit on the heart; and that all true believers are thus purified, and finally made *meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*.† We also believe, that this purifying process is complete when the spirit puts off this body of sin and death, so that there is an *immediate*, as well as *an abundant entrance administered to it into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*.‡ The Papists, however, think otherwise; and their doctrine, on this subject, we are this evening to state and to consider, under the general topics of PURGATORY AND PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

And these two topics are inseparable the one from the other; and therefore we shall not aim at a separate consideration of them, but pay our respects to them as they may appear in company with each other in the course of the present lecture. If there is no *purgatory*, there need no *prayers for the dead*: the blessed do

* Ps. li. 5. † Colos. i. 12. ‡ 2 Pet. i. 11.

not require our prayers, for they cannot make them happier than they are: and as for the damned, it is useless to pray for them, their doom being irrevocably sealed. But if there is a purgatory, such as the Papists represent, in which the prayers, and alms, and masses of the living may avail, either to lessen the term or the degree of suffering to the souls of the departed, then the more numerous and frequent the prayers said for such a purpose the better; and happy they whose wealth enables them, by large donations and prompt payments, to secure a larger number and a greater frequency of these expiatory services, that so they may expedite the passage of their relatives and friends through the state of misery, or secure, by testamentary bequests, the same desirable object for themselves, in the event of their own dissolution!

But we must endeavour to confine our observations on this fruitful and important topic within certain prescribed limits. I propose, therefore, in the first place, to state the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead, as it appears in the writings and usages of Papists; and to examine the evidence by which they vainly endeavour to support it. And, secondly, to produce the objections which we, as Protestants, have against it, and point you to the better way which is laid open to us in the Scriptures.

You will naturally ask, such of you as are ignorant upon the subject, what is meant by *purgatory*? I hasten to inform you; and, that we may do the Papists no injustice, we will take the definition of it from their own writings.

In the "Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine, contained in the Profession of Faith, published by Pope Pius IV., by way of question and answer," under the article *Purgatory*, we have the following:

"*Question.* What is the doctrine of the Church as to this point?

"*Answer.* We constantly hold that there is a purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful: that is, by the prayers and alms offered for them, and principally by the holy sacrifice of the mass.

"*Question.* What do you mean by purgatory?

"*Answer.* A middle state of souls which depart this



life in God's grace, yet not without some lesser stains, or guilt of punishment, which retards them from entering heaven. But as to the particular place where these souls suffer, or the quality of the torments which they suffer, the Church has decided nothing."

I admire the prudence of the Church in not attempting to decide either the *place* or the *quality* of purgatorial torment; but *one* thing it has not escaped her sagacity to determine, and that one thing is of much greater moment to the increase of her revenue and the wealth of her priesthood; namely, that *whatever* the poor souls in purgatory may endure, and *wherever* they endure it, the more frequently the appointed number of prayers and masses are said for their deliverance, the sooner their sufferings will be over, and the more prompt the *payment*, the more the business will be expedited; for few, if any, can buy these articles on trust.

But to return to our quotations from the "Grounds of the Catholic Faith."

"*Question.* What sort of Christians, then, go to purgatory?"

"*Answer.* First, such as die guilty of lesser sins, which we commonly call *venial*, as many Christians do, who, either by sudden death or otherwise, are taken out of this life before they have repented for these ordinary failings. Secondly, such as, having been guilty of greater sins, have not made full satisfaction for them to Divine justice."

Thus we learn what purgatory is, for *whom* it is designed, and *what* it is to accomplish; and truly, if we did not know from better authority, that *the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin*,* and that nothing remains to be laid to the charge of God's elect, *whom God justifieth, and for whom Christ hath died*,† we might think it a capital resource, and though painful enough, yet certainly better than the pains of hell for ever. But, happily, we know a Saviour who saveth to the uttermost,‡ and need not impoverish our wives and children and relatives, by leaving in our wills, or requiring them to expend in our behalf, large sums of money in prayers and masses for the deliverance of our souls from such a place as this.

* 1 John i. 7. † Rom. viii. 33, 34. ‡ Heb. vii. 25.

But Papists have a wonderful method of evading the force of any statement you make concerning their doctrines, by affirming that it is incorrect. If you take it from one of their own catechisms or formularies, they will say, it is not universally acknowledged by the Church. If from some eminent writer of their own communion, they will tell you his statements are not the doctrines of the Church. And it is debated by many, whether the Pope is infallible alone, without a general council, or a general council without the Pope; or whether the concurrence of the Pope, with a general council, in any particular doctrine, is not essential to its being regarded as infallible truth, and a point to be universally received by the Church. We shall, therefore, trouble you with more statements than one of the doctrine in question, from Popish writers, not neglecting even the decisions of councils and of popes; and surely, from the concurrent testimony of doctors, fathers, catechisms, confessions, councils, and popes, we shall be enabled to elicit the truth at last.

The next account which we shall give of purgatory, then, is from a work entitled "The Faith of Catholics," as quoted by Mr. Fletcher, in his Lectures on this controversy.*

"Catholics hold there is a purgatory, *i. e.* a place or state, where souls departing this life, with remission of their sins, as to the guilt or eternal pain, but yet liable to some temporal punishment still remaining due, or not perfectly freed from the blemish of some defects, which we call venial sins, are purged before their admittance into heaven, where nothing that is defiled can enter. We also believe that such souls, so detained in purgatory, being the living members of Christ Jesus, are relieved by the prayers and suffrages of their fellow-members here on earth. But where this place be; of what nature or quality the pains be; how long souls may be there detained; in what manner the suffrages made in their behalf be applied; whether by way of satisfaction or intercession, &c. are questions superfluous and impertinent as to faith." (Prop. xi. xii., p. 351, 352.)

* I gladly avail myself of this opportunity of recommending the perusal of Mr. Fletcher's admirable volume to all who wish to make themselves acquainted with the points at issue between the Papists and the Protestants.

—No; all that they seem to know about it is, that they are somewhere in torment; that nothing but masses and prayers can get them out; and the poor, deluded Papists know full well, that these masses must be duly bought and paid for.—This I have evidence to show: witness the 9th rule of an association, entitled “A spiritual Association commenced in Saint Anthony’s Chapel, Scotland-road, Liverpool,” which is as follows. “Souls departed before the commencement of this association, *if their names be entered and regularly paid for by their living friends*, [mark that!] will reap equal benefit by the pious prayers of the associates, and especially by the propitiatory sacrifice of the mass.” Thus, it seems, the masses must be regularly *paid for*; and the 8th rule determines the sums, and makes provision for such as are irregular in their payments. It runs thus: “Each and every member shall pay fourpence monthly, and every month, on the day of meeting, to the treasurer, besides the sum of eightpence on the day of his or her admission. In case the subscription be not paid, ~~notice shall be given~~, and a sufficient length of time shall be allowed for ~~remitting it~~.” This association, it becomes me to state, commenced on the “2d of February, being the day of the purification of the blessed Virgin, 1807! with the laudable intention (as it states) of contributing some help for the support of the chapel.” But the Papists in Liverpool are by no means singular in having the advantage of such a *cheap* and, doubtless, *efficient* association as this for the raising of money to purchase prayers and masses for the souls of their suffering friends in purgatory. I ought, perhaps, to congratulate the Papists in Preston, on the existence of a society amongst them, which embraces this, along with its other laudable and benevolent objects. For in their address, published on the first of October, 1820, which I hold in my hand, the officers of the society state, that “seven shillings and sixpence” have been paid “for three masses for all the deceased members,” which is only half-a-crown a mass, by no means an exorbitant price!

But purgatorian societies are now common enough in Ireland: and I beg leave to give you some extracts from the rules of that in Dublin, as quoted by Mr. Fletcher, and in the paper published at Glasgow, called

"The Protestant."* The paper in question is entitled "Purgatorian Society, instituted July 1, 1813, and held in St. James's Chapel, Dublin." Then follows the introduction. "The members who compose the society of the office for the dead, commenced on the above day, at the said place, adopting the spirit and meaning of the above sacred text, [a text put at the head of the paper,] **MACCABEES xii. 46**; and wishing, in conformity to the Divine precepts of the holy Catholic Church, to extend their charitable views beyond the grave, by relieving, as far as in them lies, the suffering souls in purgatory, and inviting all tender-hearted Catholics, who have a feeling sensibility of the duty they owe their departed parents, relations, and friends, who, probably, may stand more in need of their commiseration at present, than at any period of their lifetime, to assist in the charitable and pious purpose of shortening the duration of their sufferings, by the most easy means imaginable, have agreed to and adopted the following rules." I shall only quote such rules as are important to our present purpose.

Rule 2d. "That every well-disposed Catholic, wishing to contribute to the relief of the suffering souls in purgatory, shall pay one penny per week, which shall be appropriated to the procuring of masses to be offered up for the repose of the souls of the deceased parents, relations, and friends of all the subscribers to the institution in particular, and the faithful departed in general."

Rule 5th. "That each subscriber, on entering this society, do purchase a copy of these rules, in order to defray the expenses incurred by printing and other contingencies; and that the money arising from the weekly subscriptions shall be disposed of to the most necessitated clergymen, who shall be required to give receipts for what they are paid."

Rule 6th. "That the spiritual benefits of this institution shall be conferred in the following manner, viz. each subscriber shall be entitled to an office at the time of their death, another at the expiration of a month,

* In delivering the Lecture, I took an opportunity to assure such of the congregation as were strangers to Mr. McGavin, the author of "The Protestant," of the respectability of that gentleman's character, and that perfect confidence might be placed in his statements, notwithstanding any thing which might have been said to the contrary.

and one at the end of twelve months after their decease. [Query, would not the suffering souls be sooner released from purgatory, if these masses were said more frequently? Surely it is a hard case to keep the miserable creatures in torment for twelve months, when by saying the masses all at one time, they would be immediately discharged.] Also the benefit of masses which shall be procured to be offered, by the money arising from subscriptions, and which shall be extended to their parents, relations, and friends, in the following order, that is to say, their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and, if married, husbands, wives, and children, if they have any departed, who lived to maturity."

Rule 7th provides, that the Superior, at the time of his death, shall be entitled to three masses, the Rector two, and every subscriber, without distinction, one, provided such member and subscriber shall die a natural death, be six months a subscriber, and clear of all dues at the time of his departure.—Methinks there must be a strong contest for the office, whenever a Superior or Rector is to be elected in this purgatorian society; for to have the benefit of two or three masses at a time is no mean consideration, as it must, of course, expedite the passage of such souls through the pains of purgatory with a double and treble celerity; and a man would make vigorous efforts, one should imagine, to obtain a single day's relief from the endurance of so much torment as that which Papists represent in the pains of purgatory. But whence, I ask, this invidious and cruel distinction? Why doom a man to suffer such excruciating agonies for so much longer a term, merely because he had not the honour or advantage of being an officer of one of these purgatorian societies? Do the Papists allow that God has any thing to do with the affairs of purgatory? And will He connive at so much partiality? Or is it quite at the control of the priests? Have they the key of purgatory, to let out *whom* they please and *when* they please? Then I say, the whole arrangement, and the system of selling masses, and proportioning their number and frequency to the *pay*, shows the mercenary and the merciless spirit of the priesthood.

The 9th Rule provides, "That the superior shall, on every All Souls' Day, advance to the parish priest of

St. James's-street Chapel whatever sum is necessary for obtaining an insertion in the mortality list of the altar. The names of the parents, relations, and friends of all the subscribers to this institution to be recommended to the prayers of the congregation at every mass throughout the year."

And now, I imagine, I have quoted quite enough from this precious document to shock the common sense and benevolence of every one of ordinary understanding and feeling in this assembly. They head up their institution with a text, which they call *sacred*, taken out of the book of the Maccabees; a book which has as much claim to be accounted sacred, to be respected as of Divine inspiration and canonical authority, as the bulls of their Popes and the decrees of their councils, which is just none at all. If they have no better ground on which to rest the doctrine of purgatory than the apocryphal book of the Maccabees, they had better give it up at once; for any evidence that might be adduced to prove the inspiration of that book would be rejected in an ordinary court of justice. Nay, the writer himself makes an apology at the end of the book for the imperfections which it may contain. A pretty thing, truly, for a man to do, who had written under the influence of the unerring Spirit of God. "*And here,*" he says, "*will I make an end; and if I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired; but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto.*"* Now is it possible for a man to write *meanly*, or in a manner not *fitting the subject*, who writes under the inspiration of the Spirit of God? Or is it likely that such an one would tell us at the end, as the only apology he could make for his failings and his blunders, that he had done his best? Yet because this writer, who himself makes no pretensions to inspiration, says, *That Judas made a gathering to send to Jerusalem, to procure a sin offering and prayers for the dead*,† the monstrous doctrine of purgatory is to be an article of the Christian faith for ever! Oh! ye Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, Priests, and Councils of the Church of Rome, are ye so infatuated as to believe such horrible nonsense, on such paltry authority? But it is not to those that fatten on the spoils

* 2 Maccabees xv. 37, 38.

† 2 Maec. xii. 43, 44.

made by the traffic that I should appeal; they are too deeply interested in keeping up the farce and spreading the delusion. But, ye common people, whom God has endowed with mental faculties, capable of weighing evidence and separating truth from error, I appeal to you. You are interested in proving this monstrous doctrine to be false; for if it is proved to your satisfaction to be false, it will be at once a saving to your pockets and a relief to your minds. Now the Catholic writers usually put this *sacred* text, as the founders of the Dublin Purgatorian Society call it, in the front of their arguments in support of purgatory, whence one would infer, that it is a passage on which they mean to lay especial stress. But will you bow down your spirit to the belief of a monstrous doctrine, that impoverishes you in this life and torments you in the next, when its chief support is drawn from a book, not even numbered amongst the books of holy writ, till the Councils of Popes and Cardinals put it there, and the writer of which, in effect, affirms that he was not inspired? If I shall succeed in showing you, as I hope hereafter to do, that all the passages which they bring out of the canonical and really inspired books of Scripture, to prove the truth of purgatory, have no more to do with it than they have to do with the gaol at Preston—but that this in the Maccabees is the only place where any thing like purgatory is hinted at; then you are bound, in common sense and common honesty, to give it up, as a gross and oppressive imposition. And, methinks, if it is once proved to be such, the Church that has imposed it is little worthy of your confidence and your esteem.

But, that the Papists may have nothing but fair dealing in this argument; that they may not have it to say, that I have taken the statement of the doctrine of purgatory from the rules of obscure societies, unknown and unacknowledged by any of the duly constituted authorities of the Church, I proceed to quote the sentiments of the Right Rev. Richd. Challoner, D.D. V.A. &c. on this important subject. It is extracted from his book entitled “The Catholic Christian Instructed.” In his preface, the Doctor tells us, that the design of his book is “to explain the doctrine and ceremonies of the Catholic Church, and to vindicate the same from the

misrepresentations of *its* adversaries." Of course, then; we may regard the sentiments contained in that book as correctly stated; for, certainly, the Bishop will not be guilty of the sin which he reproves, and misrepresents the Catholic doctrine himself, in the very book which he has written for the purpose of correcting the misrepresentations of others. Let us, then, turn to what the right reverend author says about purgatory and prayers for the dead. He says that, besides those who go straight to heaven after death, who are, he fears, very few; and those who go straight to hell, who are very many, "there are many Christians, who, when they die, are neither so perfectly pure and clean as to be exempt from the least spot or stain, nor yet so unhappy as to die under the guilt of unrepented deadly sin. Now such as these, the Church believes to be, for a time, in a middle state, which we call purgatory; and these are they who are capable of receiving benefit by our prayers." This is the Doctor's statement of purgatory. Now for his arguments. He tells us, that they are derived from various sources,—*Scripture, perpetual Tradition, the authority and declaration of the Church of God, and from Reason.* He might have saved himself the trouble of appealing to all the other sources of argument, except the first. For, if purgatory is in the Scripture, we do not want Tradition, nor the Church, nor any other authority whatever; for nothing can be added to the weight of Scripture testimony. But if it is not in the Scripture, though it were in every other book from the time of the Apostles to the present hour, I would not receive it, unless I could be brought to believe, that Tradition is equal in authority to the written word, and the uninspired Church of God infallible as God himself. I am aware that Papists are taught to believe this. The grounds on which they are taught to believe it have already been examined and proved to be fallacious.* It is not my business to go over them again: I must therefore assume, that nothing has equal authority with Scripture, and proceed to examine the arguments from that quarter, as all that is necessary on the present occasion. For if the Bible

* In the judicious Lecture of the Rev. William Roby, of Manchester, on "Scripture, not Tradition, the Rule of Faith."

proves the doctrine of purgatory, it must stand: if it does not, but, on the contrary, disproves it, it must fall: not even the Conclave of Cardinals, with his Holiness at their head, with all his thundering bulls and decrees of assumed infallibility, can hold it up.

But, before I proceed to the alleged arguments from Scripture, in support of purgatory and prayers for the dead, I shall beg leave to quote a still higher authority than any to which I have yet appealed, in relation to the doctrine, as an essential article of the Romish faith. It is no less than the celebrated Council of Trent. The Council of Trent, the ecclesiastical historian, Mosheim, observes, was assembled to correct, illustrate, and fix, with perspicuity, the doctrine of the Church;—although many are of opinion that, instead of reforming ancient abuses, this council rather gave rise to new enormities; and many of their transactions have excited the just complaints of the wisest men of both communions.* By the by, what becomes of the infallibility of the Church, if even the acts of a *general council* are matters of regret to the wise and good of the Romish communion? Father Paul confirms this representation of the Council of Trent; for, in his preface to the history of it, which he wrote, he says: “It plainly discovered, that the Bishops of Rome, (of whom eight lived and died during the time of the synod and treaty thereof,) instead of being Christ’s holy vicars, as they pretend, have been the greatest and most pernicious quack-salving jugglers that ever the earth did bear.”† However, the decree of the Council of Trent on the subject of purgatory is as follows; and, whatever difference may exist amongst the doctors of the Romish Church, as to many things said and done by that council, I imagine that they will agree in admitting the authority of the grave and reverend assembly on this point.

“As the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Spirit, from the sacred writings, and the ancient tradition of the fathers, hath taught in its sacred councils, and, lastly, in this oecumenical synod, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls there confined are relieved by the suffrages of the faithful, but more

* Mosheim’s Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. p. 209.

† Preface to his History of the Council of Trent.

especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar, the holy synod instructs the bishops that they should pay attention, that the sound doctrine concerning purgatory, as delivered by the holy fathers and the sacred councils, be by the faithful in Christ believed, held, taught, and everywhere diligently preached. But that, among uninformed people, the more difficult and subtle questions, which tend not to edification, and from which there is in general no increase of piety, be excluded from all popular addresses.—But let the bishops take care, that the suffrages of the faithful who are alive, namely, the sacrifices of the mass, orations, acts of charity, and other pious deeds, which it has been customary for the faithful to perform on behalf of the other faithful who are dead, should be piously and devoutly performed, according to the institutions of the Church; and that those (*religious services*) which may be owing on the behalf of such, to the legacies of testators, or on any other account, be by the priests, ministers of the Church, and others, whose duty it is to perform those matters, not slightly, but diligently and accurately discharged.*

Now you cannot but observe how very cautiously this decree of the Council of Trent is worded. It clearly anticipates the difficulties with which it would have to contend from the common sense of discerning people, and, by guarded expressions, provides as much as possible against them. Accordingly, Father Paul, in his history of this memorable council, tells us, * that the care of composing the decree of *purgatory* "was committed to the Cardinal of *Varmia* and eight prelates, who, though they all resolved not to move any difficulties, yet they did not agree. Some were willing to make mention of the place of purgatory, and of the fire, as was done in the Council of Florence. Others said, that this being hard to do, and impossible to find words to express it, which might give satisfaction to all, it was better to say only, that the good works of the faithful did help the dead for the remission of their sins. The Archbishop of *Lanciano* said, that in handling the mass mention was made, that that sacrifice is offered for those that are deceased in Christ, not entirely purged; by which words the doctrine of purgatory was

* Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent, fol. p. 798.

sufficiently defined: so that nothing remained to be done, but to enjoin the bishops to cause it to be preached, and to take away the abuses, taking care, also, that there be no want of due prayers for the dead. And so the decree was made."

We are certainly much obliged to Father Paul for letting us a little into the interior of this august assembly, whose decrees have done so much towards rivetting the chains of superstition and mental slavery upon the neck of Christendom. And we marvel greatly to see how much they are perplexed about this same doctrine of purgatory: fearful of speaking out too plainly, lest a day should come (a day that has happily arrived) when men should ridicule their monstrous doctrine; yet reluctant to withhold their high sanction from so lucrative a portion of Papal imposition. *So some cried one thing, and some another*, just as they did at Ephesus, when the priests of the great goddess, Diana, whose shrine was as great a source of revenue to them as purgatory is to the priests of Rome, saw that their craft was in danger from the preaching of Paul.*

Now, we have done ample justice to the Papists, by taking their doctrine of purgatory from such sources as must surely be regarded by themselves as authentic: the rules of two modern and neighbouring purgatorian societies; the writings of a vicar apostolic; the catechism published by a pope; and the decree of a general council. And we find their united testimony to amount to this: that there is a certain place, though nobody knows exactly where, some say on earth, some in hell, though all agree that it is not in heaven, but most, that it is between both, "in which, as in a prison-house, the souls which were not fully purged in this life are cleansed and purged by fire, before they can be received into heaven."†

Let us, then, proceed to examine the arguments by which this monstrous doctrine is supported; and we confine ourselves chiefly to such as they profess to derive from Scripture.

1. And the text which usually appears first and foremost in support of purgatory is that in the

* Acts xix. 24—41.

† Synopsis Papismi, p. 404, fol. Lond. 1634.

Maccabees. There is another in Tobit, which is sometimes introduced; but, as the evidence to prove one book of the Apocrypha not inspired applies to all the rest, I shall merely confine myself to the book of the Maccabees. Of how much consequence the Papists think this text, may be gathered from the circumstance, that Cardinal Bellarmin, Bishop Challoner, and many other generals in this warfare, place it in the very van of the battle, to meet the first attack of the enemy. Now, we think, we have already shown, that the book of the Maccabees is not inspired; and that from the very best authority, namely, the *acknowledgment of the writer himself*, who certainly would not have apologized for his defects in composition, if he had been inspired to write it. But you may wish to have some further reasons for our belief that this book, together with the rest of the books of the Apocrypha, are not inspired, and we freely give them. They formed no part of the Old Testament in the time of Christ. The Jews never acknowledged them as canonical. Our Lord never refers to them as a part of Holy Scripture, nor quotes a single sentence from them, though he did refer to the Psalms, to Moses and the Prophets, that is, the whole volume of Scripture which the Jews regarded as the inspired word of God, and thus stamp them with the seal of his high authority. *The Council of Trent*, indeed, declared them to be canonical, and *Cardinal Bellarmin* declares them to be canonical; and *Bishop Challoner* declares them to be canonical; but as none of these, not even the holy council itself, were divinely inspired, we take the liberty, on the grounds which we have stated, to differ from them, and to regard these books as the writings of fallible mortals like ourselves, and, therefore, having no authority whatever in such a matter as this. So much for the argument for purgatory, drawn from the Maccabees. Alas! if this text is deemed of sufficient strength to bear the brunt of the attack, what is to become of all the rest, now that the standard-bearer has fallen?

2. The Papists argue, that, *as God will render to every man according to his works*,* there must be a purgatory. We admit the *premises*, but deny the

* Matt. xvi. 27.

conclusion. We know that God will render to every man according to his works; but how does this prove purgatory? Why thus, say the Papists—"They who die in great and deadly sins, not cancelled by repentance, will be eternally punished in hell. So, by the same rule of God's justice, they that die in lesser, or *venial* sins—will be punished somewhere for a time, till God's justice be satisfied; and this is what we call purgatory."* Now observe, first, this distinction between *great* and *little* sins, &c. is one of their own making, and it serves the purpose of purgatory very well; the business would be at an end without it: but I defy them to find it in Scripture. On the contrary, whatever distinction there may be, as to degrees of turpitude in sin, in *our apprehension* of it; whatever difference, as to the influence of a sinful action on society, or in comparison with other sins, the word of God lays down this fixed principle, that *every transgression or omission* of the Divine law is sin, and, *as such*, indicating a state of mind in the offender hostile to that law, *exposes him to the righteous vengeance of an offended God*; inasmuch, that *whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*† It remained for Papists, by the admirable invention of purgatory, to subvert this order, and to represent the Almighty as taking a middle course, and thus making him (O most horrible!) a party in the lucrative traffic carried on in connexion with departed souls. For can it be concealed, that this purgatorial scheme makes God render to every man, not according to his *works*, but according to his *wealth*? For who are they that get soonest out of purgatory? They who have most masses said on their behalf. And who are they who have most masses said on their behalf? They who pay most money to the priests. Hence we find large sums bequeathed for this especial purpose. "The Rev. Matt. Tennon, titular Bishop of Dromore, bequeathed £500 to purchase six government debentures, for the purpose of establishing a daily mass for his soul, in the Chapel of Newry, in perpetuance."‡ Now the Papists say, that the souls of the departed go

* Bishop Challoner's Catholic Christian, 12mo, Lond. 1810, p. 258, 259.

† James ii. 10.

‡ Protestant, vol. ii. p. 223.

to purgatory to suffer for little sins, and to be purged from little stains. Then I should like to know, in the case of such as get more quickly through, by means of the suffrages, &c. of the priests, whether God remits the punishment they were doomed to suffer (and but for these prayers would have suffered) on account of the prayers, or of the money paid for them? If on account of the *prayers* simply, then prayers said *gratuitously* would be of equal avail; and as, we are told, there is a commemoration of all the faithful in every mass, of course including those whose relations are too poor to pay for them, then whence the necessity of paying at all? If that *general commemoration* is of any avail, it is enough, and money spent in buying masses for particular individuals is needlessly laid out. But if this *general commemoration* does not avail, then it is only an insult to the poor to insinuate that it does. It will be affirmed, perhaps, that the *masses*, not the money, are the consideration on account of which the punishment is remitted; but the priests will not say the *masses* without the money! Can any cruelty, then, be conceived greater than that of the priests? are there any bosoms more unfeeling than theirs? They have the key that can unlock the door of purgatory, and let the suffering spirits out; but they will not apply it till they are duly paid for it! What, if you had the means of liberating a fellow-creature shut up within a house that was blazing round him, would you refrain from using them? would you let the unhappy man burn on in the devouring element, till somebody had paid you the sum which you demanded for his deliverance? And what is material fire to the flames of purgatory? I should, also, like to ask another question, i. e. whether the souls who get out of purgatory by means of the suffrages of the faithful, are as pure from stains, as those who go through the whole process of purgation? If they are, then the prayers and masses, I presume, quicken the operation of purgatorial fire, so that they heat it, like Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, seven times hotter, that it may do its work more quickly. But if not, then they are let into heaven not perfectly cleansed, after all; God is made a liar by those that call themselves his ministers; and their miserably-trumped up story of purgatorial fire proves to be a

mere farce and bugbear, after all, that need frighten none but such as are too poor to bribe it. So much for the doctrine of purgatory, as necessary in order that God may reward men according to their works. We see that it makes him reward them according to the *prayers* and the *pay*.

3. Another text which the Papists bring forward in support of the doctrine of purgatory is the one which I have taken as a text: *There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, &c.* And how does this prove purgatory? Why thus: there are few that die "pure from the dregs and stains to which we are ever subject in this state of mortality. And yet God forbid," says Bishop Challoner, "that every little spot or stain should condemn the soul to the everlasting torments of hell! Therefore there must be a middle place for such as die under these lesser stains."* Miserable beings! do they not know that *the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin; little sins as well as large ones; light stains as well as deep? that they who believe are justified freely, without any money paid to the priests for getting the work accomplished, from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses?*† Are not all his people complete in him?‡ Are they not justified by the righteousness of Christ? and must they take that righteousness to purgatory? Is not Christ with all his believing people *every where?* and will he not be with them in purgatory? Rejoice, then, believer, there can be no terror in purgatory to you. If the Son of Man is with you in the flame, you need not spend your money in masses to get you out. No matter how long you stay; the power of the fire, though all the devils in hell and all the priests of Rome should blow it up, will be neutralized by the presence of your Lord. *The smell of fire shall not so much as pass upon you.*§ Purgatory will prove a paradise, and you will realize the poet's sentiment,

"Thy presence makes my paradise,
And where thou art is heaven."||

But really this monstrous dogma of Christ atoning for the *great* sins, and leaving his people to suffer for the

* Challoner, p. 259.

† Acts xiii. 39.

‡ Col. ii. 10.

§ Daniel iii. 27.

|| Watts.

little ones; purging the *deepest* stains, and leaving it to purgatory to burn out the *lesser*, is an absurdity so gross, that, with the exception of transubstantiation, it stands unrivalled in the annals of human folly; and, if it were not for the solemn subject with which it is connected, and the grave and respectable names by which it has been supported, would only merit the contempt and ridicule of every man endowed with a single grain of common sense. Indeed, some of the wisest men of their own Church are ashamed of it, if what is related in a work entitled "*A Preservation against Popery, by Abp. Wake*," be true, namely, that a certain great cardinal, being disposed to puzzle his chaplain, asked him "how many masses would serve to fetch a soul out of purgatory? To which when he appeared, as well he might, unable to reply, the cardinal thus pleasantly resolved the doubt, 'That just as many masses would serve to fetch a soul out of purgatory, as snowballs would serve to heat an oven.'"^{*}

4. The next Scripture proof of purgatory the Papists attempt to draw from what our Lord says respecting the sin against the Holy Ghost, namely, *that it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.*† And thus logically do they reason, or rather set all reason at defiance: "The sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven in the world to come; therefore there are sins that shall."[‡] Suppose any man were to make an unjust demand upon me for a debt that I knew I had never incurred. I might use a strong expression in reply to him, and say, "No, I will never pay you that demand, neither in this world nor the next."

^{*} *Preservation against Popery*. Title viii. pp. 113, 114, as quoted in the Protestant.

† Matthew, xii. 32.

‡ "Our Lord," says Bishop Challoner, "would never have mentioned forgiveness in the world to come, if sins not forgiven in this world could never be forgiven in the world to come. Now, if there may be forgiveness of any sin whatsoever in the world to come, there must be a middle place, or purgatory; for no sin can enter heaven, to be forgiven there, and in hell there is no forgiveness."—(*Bishop Challoner*, p. 260.) But our Lord does not mention *forgiveness*, but the contrary, in the world to come. He says, that the sin of which he is speaking shall *not be forgiven*, neither in this world nor that which is to come. If he had said any thing about *forgiveness in the world to come*, there might have been some propriety in the Bishop's remark; but, as it is, he himself puts words in the lips of the Saviour which he never uttered, and then draws his own conclusions from them.

Would that be acknowledging to him that he had demands against me which I *would* pay in the next world? Upon the mode of reasoning adopted by the Papists it would; that is, "because the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven in the next world, there are some sins that shall." But, even if this passage prove that there are sins forgiven in the next world, how does it prove purgatory? For sins are not *forgiven* in purgatory. What, is a man's debt forgiven, when he endures imprisonment, and pays for his release after all? Yet this is the case with the souls that get out of purgatory: and they must think it a strange kind of forgiveness, truly, who, after burning nobody knows how many years, are let out at last by means of masses duly said and paid for. I do not see, indeed, what this text, even on their own showing, has to do with purgatory at all, unless it be to prove that there is no such thing. But Mark and Luke explain its meaning to those who are so dull of apprehension that they are in danger of mistaking it. Mark says, *he hath never forgiveness*; and Luke simply, *it shall not be forgiven*.

5. The passage in 1 Cor. iii. 13—15, is wrested by the Papists as a proof of purgatory, with as much propriety as all the rest. And as for driving them from this imaginary strong hold, a very child might achieve the triumph. *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire.* The *fire*, says the Apostle, *shall try every man's work*. But purgatory is not to try men's *works*: they are tried; and purgatory is to punish them on their account, because they are not quite so good as they should be. So that the fire here spoken of can have nothing to do with purgatory, whatever else it may have to do with. The Apostle again says, *if any man's work shall be burned*, (you see, in this case, the *work* is the only thing that is to burn, but in purgatory it is the soul that burns; quite a different thing,) *he shall suffer loss, yet he himself shall be saved, so as by fire*. Now *so as* means not literally by fire, but by some severe process of trial and

discipline that should operate in a powerful way, like fire; for when we say a thing is like another thing, we do not mean that it is that very thing which it resembles. But purgatory saves people by *fire, literally*. Alas! there is no figure of speech in this case, as the tortured souls themselves and their sorrowful friends on earth must know full well, the one by the power of the fire, the other by the pay for the prayers! But in this passage the Apostle is evidently speaking of ministers who, by the preaching of the Gospel, made converts to the Christian faith, and thus might be said to build upon the foundation laid; the characters of those who were thus admitted would be tried by the fire of persecution; and they would lose the reward of such as failed in the hour of extremity, and went back to perdition. Or it may refer to the general trial at the day of judgment. And yet from this the priests of Rome have kindled the flames of purgatory, and kept them burning from the days of Adam to the present time!

6. Allow me to trouble you with my humble opinion as to the meaning of the passage relative to Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison, in 1 Peter iii. 18—20, which the Papists have employed as furnishing an argument for purgatory, and I close the defensive part of this Lecture. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water.* The following paraphrase appears to me to give the sense of the passage: *By the same Spirit, by which Christ was raised from the dead, he (Christ) preached to the antediluvians, [through the ministration of Noah,] whose guilty souls, then disobedient, are for that disobedience now confined in prison.* But who say that they are in the prison of purgatory? The Papists. How do they know it? I am sure I cannot tell—but I venture to affirm, that they are not in the prison of purgatory, but in the prison of HELL, and I will make the Papists themselves prove it too. In "*The Grounds of the Catholic Faith*," already quoted, is this query: "What sort of Christians, then,

go to purgatory? *Answer.* Such as die guilty of *lesser sins.*" And pray, were the antediluvians guilty of *lesser sins* only? Was it for *lesser sins* that God wrought the mighty ruin of the deluge? Do not the Scriptures say, that God *saw that the wickedness of man was great.** Now, if the antediluvians are in purgatory, then *great sinners* go to purgatory, and thus God gives Papists the lie, for they say it is for *little sinners* only: but if Papists are true in their doctrine of purgatory, then they give God the lie, for they say the antediluvians are in purgatory, and only *little sinners* go there; yet God affirms that the antediluvians were *great sinners.*—*Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.†*

† [There is another passage which, I understand, the Papists bring forward in support of purgatory, and which I omitted last week to notice, and no wonder, for I never dreamt of such an application of it. However, as a Pope, namely, Pius IV., has deemed it sufficient and conclusive evidence in support of the doctrine of purgatory, it certainly becomes me not to pass by it in silence. The passage is *Matt. v. 25, 26. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.* Now this prison, say the Papists, is purgatory. But what authority have they for saying so? His Holiness the Pope and St. Cyprian say it is. And what then? With those who hold the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope, his *ipse dixit* is enough. But Protestants, who are not of that opinion, pay no more regard to it than to the *ipse dixit* of any other man; and as they find nothing like the popish doctrine of purgatory in the Scriptures, they beg leave to dissent from his Holiness at Rome, and reject the doctrine till they have better evidence. I may say that the cockpit, at Preston, or the gaol, at Lancaster, is

* Gen. vi. 5.

† Rom. iii. 4.

‡ This paragraph, included in the crotchets, was added on the second delivery of the Lecture, the passage there alluded to having escaped me, and the Papists having triumphantly affirmed that I purposely avoided it, knowing it contained too powerful an argument in their favour.

purgatory, or any other place I choose to mention; but are they so, because I say it? To show you, however, the absurdity of applying this text to purgatory, even on their own principles, allow me to invite your attention to the words themselves. *Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by NO MEANS COME out thence, till THOU hast paid the uttermost farthing.* But if this is purgatory, the priests tell a different story respecting it. They say, a man may come out without paying the uttermost farthing, if the priests only say masses and prayers enough to accomplish his discharge. There is *one sense*, indeed, in which it is true enough that the uttermost farthing must be paid, but that is of *money to the priests*: for a poor sufferer in purgatory has little or no chance of escape from his torment, unless the uttermost farthing is paid to them. But, then, the uttermost farthing of this debt, they tell us, will do just as well if paid by the sufferer's friends as by the sufferer himself; and thus, in their application of this passage to purgatory, they give the lie to the Son of God: they say a man may come out without paying the uttermost farthing, as to his own personal suffering; or if the uttermost farthing is paid of the demand for the masses that get him out, it will suffice, though the money be paid by some other person. In fact, it is no concern of theirs who pays the money, so that it is but paid.]

Thus I have examined the principal arguments brought by the Papists in support of the doctrine of purgatory. You, my friends, must determine how far they are valid or not. We now proceed briefly to state a few objections against the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead, by way of direct and specific charge. And,

1. THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY GIVES THE LIE TO INNUMERABLE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

In the book of Ecclesiastes it is said, xi. 3, *If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth there it shall be.* Now this is generally understood to be a figurative representation of the unalterable state of men after death. But Dr. Challoner says, it is by no means clear that it does refer to this; but if it does, "it makes nothing against purgatory, because it only proves what no

Catholic denies, viz. that when once a soul has come to the south or to the north, that is, to heaven or to hell, its state is unchangeable.”* True, it says nothing about purgatory, and for a very good reason,—the Scriptures know nothing of such a place. But, according to the Papists’ doctrine of purgatory, there are many more souls, I suppose a hundred to one, fall towards purgatory than fall towards heaven; and, therefore, it is very wonderful that the sacred writer, in this case, should only speak of those that fall towards hell and heaven, but say nothing about those that fall towards purgatory. But is it not obvious to every one’s common sense, that, if this language refer to the state of the departed at all, it clearly teaches that death fixes the states of men for ever, and, therefore, that there can be no purgatory? For they who fall into purgatory do not lie for ever as they fall, but, after awhile, change their place and their position, very much, doubtless, to their comfort and advantage.

It gives the lie to the declaration of our Lord to the dying thief: *to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*† Now, according to the doctrine of the Papists, he went to purgatory; and surely, of all whom they send thither, there never was one more suitable than he. But our Lord says *to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.* The Papists generally get over this by observing, that it was an extraordinary case, and Christ gave him a “full discharge,”‡ a privilege granted to very few. But yet, methinks, *they* may be considered as *fully* discharged, of whom it may be said, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.*§ And this may be said of all believers. And again the appeal is made: *Who is he that condemneth?* And the answer is not—they have suffered the pains of purgatory, but—*It is Christ that died!*§ But Bishop Challoner has a very curious and ingenious way of managing the case of the dying thief. He says, that “our Lord’s descending after death into *limbo*, to the holy fathers, made that place a paradise, by manifesting his glory to those happy souls; and this was the paradise into which he introduced the good thief

* Bishop Challoner’s Catholic Christian, p. 264.

† Luke xxiii. 43.

‡ Bishop Challoner, p. 265.

§ Romans viii. 33, 34.

immediately after his death.”* Now, this is certainly a most novel mode of interpreting Scripture, and the holy fathers in *limbo* must be much obliged to the Vicar Apostolic for sending them such good company!—And this, moreover, proves the truth of what I said, that the presence of Christ would make a paradise of purgatory; and hence that, as his presence is always with his believing people, purgatory is a paradise to them, and they need not, therefore, put themselves or their relations to the expense of masses to get them out. But is it really to be believed, that a wise and sensible man should calmly and deliberately write such nonsense, about Christ going to *limbo*, and taking the dying thief with him, on a visit to the holy fathers there? Or is the book from which I have quoted a spurious publication, intended to libel the Papists, with the Right Rev. Doctor's name on the title page?

The doctrine of purgatory gives the lie to the Apostle Paul; for he said, *to depart and to be with Christ is far better*†—but to depart and be in purgatory is not far better, but far worse: and, heavy as were the labours and trials of the Apostle, yet, cheered by the presence and supported by the power of Christ, one cannot imagine for a moment but that he would prefer this life, with all its toils, to the flames of purgatory. But the Apostle was an exception, I presume, and one of the favoured few, by whom the priests get nothing, but who go straight to heaven, without paying toll at the bridge of purgatory! But it equally gives the lie to the voice which John heard in the visions of the Apocalypse, commanding him to write, *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them*.‡ But a pretty kind of rest that is which departed saints enjoy in purgatory! A man, one should think, would not have much rest with a blazing fire just under him; he would certainly be much more comfortable in a cooler place! With regard to their works following them, according to the doctrine of purgatory, that certainly holds good, but in a very different way to what the voice from heaven intended, and in such a way as one cannot but suppose these pious souls had rather

* Bishop Challoner, p. 266.

† Philip. i. 23.

‡ Rev. xiv. 13.

they would stay behind. But the Papists endeavour to draw off the minds of the common people from the contemplation of this formidable text, by telling them, that *dying in the Lord* means only such as die in martyrdom,* with a very few besides, who are perfectly free from debts or stains. Their authority for this assertion, however, they have not condescended to quote. But, if only such as die in martyrdom escape purgatory, that is making it few enough indeed. I should like to ask, however, if such as die in martyrdom only die in the Lord, who do all the rest, that go to purgatory, die in? I mean no offence to the Papists, but simply ask the question; but if they deem the question an insult, I must say, that they themselves are the cause of it.

The case of the rich man and Lazarus is also to the point, and makes decidedly against the doctrine of purgatory.† Both died.—The rich man was *buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes—he was not in purgatory—and seeth Lazarus in Abraham's bosom*: so that neither was Lazarus in purgatory, unless we are to understand that Abraham was at that time in purgatory. But this, I should suppose, the Papists themselves would allow to be very improbable; for if the Father of the Faithful had ever been in purgatory, he had surely got out before the period there alluded to: nor is it at all likely, that holy angels would have been the bearers of Lazarus, if he had gone to such a place.

2. Another charge, and that a most formidable one, against the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead is, as we have already seen, that they interfere to destroy the infinite merit and sufficiency of the Redeemer's atoning sacrifice, perfect righteousness, cleansing blood, and prevailing intercession. They provide another sacrifice, even that of the mass, for which there can be no necessity, if the sacrifice of Christ is sufficient, and of which there is no mention made in Scripture. They furnish the sinner with a new ground of acceptance before God, even his endurance of the pains of purgatory, or the money his relations have paid for the suffrages of the Church. They provide another method

* Challoner, p. 265.

† Luke xvi. 19—31.

of cleansing sin than by the Fountain opened up at Calvary, viz. the fire of purgatory: and another intercessor is set up as a rival, or at least a partner, in the work of intercession, i. e. a mercenary and hireling priesthood! On these accounts I reject these doctrines as damnable heresies; invented, as some say, by Gregory, and others by Eugenius the Fourth, but no matter by whom, as a source of revenue to the Church,—but, alas! of oppression to the temporal circumstances, and fatal delusion to the souls of men. Even the meek and gentle spirit of Dr. Watts kindled at the contemplation of these monstrous absurdities. He says of purgatory, “it was a gainful contrivance of the priests of Rome, to erect a building between heaven and hell, where to dispose of good Christians after death, till they are completely fit for heaven. This is purgatory; a place where the remaining vices of the dying man are purged out with fire:—Those souls for whom the priest is hired to say most masses, are soonest freed from the relics of iniquity, and get the speediest release to the heavenly regions. This fills the coffers of the clergy, by the legacies of the dead. Every one that leaves the world takes something away from his friends and his heirs, to purchase prayers for himself, and to shorten the anguish of his purification. Even that excellent man, the Archbishop of Cambray,* speaks of the necessity of this purifying fire, for good Christians to burn out the remnant of self-love, by teaching them patience and entire resignation of the will, and perfect contentment under the fiery discipline.”†

What—must I, after having embraced the Lord's Christ in the arms of my faith, sink to torments, less only in *duration* than the torments of the damned? After having been justified *freely* by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ, must I, in my dying moments, be racked with the horrors of approaching purgatory? Is this being *justified*, when I am condemned to burn, nobody can tell how long,‡ in torment-

* In his “Spiritual Works.”

† Dr. Watts's Works, 4to, vol. iv. p. 522.

‡ “When they are so deuded themselves about purgatory: some holding that a man cannot, though he be a notable sinner, be above twenty yeeres in purgatory; (*Dominic a Soto in 4 Dict. 21, quest. 2, art. 1.*)

ing fire? Is this being justified *freely*, when, after enduring its agony the appointed time, I am obliged to pay, or my friends for me, for the prayers and masses that get me out? Does the blood of Christ cleanse from *all* sin, and leave *me* at last with some stains that nothing but the fire of purgatory can purge away? Is the blessed Spirit, the Purifier, unable to accomplish the *whole* of my sanctification; and must purgatorial fire finish what he has left undone? Is Christ in me the hope of glory, and does he leave me, I know not how many years, perhaps ages, to agonize amidst devouring flames and pains equal to the damned? Has Jesus promised me a crown of life, if I am faithful unto death; and must I wade through scorching fire and seas of misery before I can obtain it? When I come to my dying bed, after reviewing a long and weary life of trial, of temptation, of suffering, and of sorrow; notwithstanding my humble dependance upon the finished work of my Redeemer; notwithstanding the gracious promises that ought to cheer a dying saint, have I no prospect but that of still more hideous forms of sorrow and pangs of real woe, compared with which, all I have endured on earth is hardly to be named? Is this all the Romish faith can do? Are these all the consolations it can yield me in my dying hour? Ye priests! that have ever celebrated your religion as the only true and the best religion upon earth, can ye do no more?—and must you be paid even for this?—

Merciful God! I bless thee on my own behalf, and on behalf of all in this assembly, to whom thou hast given a better hope and stronger consolation. Jesus is our intercessor; we need no other advocate. Heaven is our home; we fear no purgatory. *Yea, though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we will fear no evil.* Believing in Jesus, *we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have*

others, that purgatory paines may continue an hundred, yea, a thousand yeeres; (*Bellar. lib. 1, de indulg. c. 9.*) some, that purgatory paine exceedeth all paine in this life, (*Dominic a Soto, ibid.*) other, that the penance of this life is more effectuell: doe they not, now, by this their uncertainty, make all the world beleue that purgatory fire is but a drowsie dreame of their owne.”—*Synopsis Papismi*, p. 1215, fol. Lond. 1634.

*a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.** Yes, goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life, and then we shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever;—and as for the fictitious torments and blasphemous absurdities of purgatory and prayers for the dead, we must leave them with those who are in love with their own misery, and the dupes of a priesthood interested in the spoil!

* 2 Cor. v. 1.



